



Bishop's Stortford & District Footpaths Association



Safeguarding your Public Rights of Way in and around Bishop's Stortford



Spring 2014 Newsletter

Notification of AGM

The **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** will be held on:

Thursday 27th March 2014 at 7.45 pm

in the Day Centre, Apton Road, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 3SN.

Parking is available in Apton Road car park nearby.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the AGM held on 28th March 2013
2. Acting Chairman's Statement and Report
3. Secretary's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Membership Subscription fees
6. Election or Confirmation of reappointment of Officers :

a. Chairman	c. Secretary
b. Vice chairman	d. Treasurer
7. Election of members to the Committee
8. Reappointment of Independent Examiner
9. Questions from Members and Discussion

BREAK FOR REFRESHMENTS

10. Talk given by : Barry Kaufmann : "Seasons of a Woodland"



Website

Some members may have noticed a few problems with the website recently. Unfortunately we were affected by a required software upgrade that took place on the server that hosts our site. Everything has now been put right and the site is working as normal. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Our website currently receives over 600 visits a month - with an average of 6 pages viewed per visit.

Reminder:

Have you paid your subscription for this year?

If not, please fill in and post the form on page 5.

This year's speaker: Barry Kaufman

Barry was born on a small mixed farm in the Chilterns, where he developed an early interest in wildlife and nature. On leaving school he was fortunate enough to work for six years with the late TV naturalist and author Gerald Durrell at the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust (Jersey Zoo).

For 32 years Barry served as a Police Officer with Essex Police, including 22 years as a Wildlife Crime Officer with the force. In his role he dealt with many wildlife issues, from wild bird trapping to badger baiting, illegal shooting of wildlife to the multi-million pound international trade in endangered species and products from them.

Barry has graduated from the Open University with a BSc (Hons) Degree in Natural Sciences and a Post Graduate Diploma in Ornithology at Birmingham University.

In 2003 Barry won a prestigious award when he was named "WWF Wildlife Law Enforcer of the Year". This is an International Award presented either to a Police Officer or Customs Officer who in the view of a panel of distinguished judges has made a significant contribution to wildlife law enforcement. Barry is justly proud of his award.

BSDFA Committee

You will know from your experience of walking on any of our walks how hard our walk leaders work. Thank you. It is thanks to all members, past and present, who do such good work in walking and clearing paths to make our local paths so pleasant to walk in.

But as in any organization you will know that a lot of work goes on behind the scenes. We're always looking for new committee members and would love to have you onboard, helping us with our worthy cause. Perhaps serving on the committee is something you might consider yourself in the future? So if you would like to help us to preserve, protect and maintain the public Rights of Way network and rural verges in the Herts and Essex why not join us?

Our committee currently consists of ten people - ideally we should have at least twelve. We have survived the last year without a Chairman or Vice-Chairman and we are in need of new people to join us.

If you are interested, please contact us by e-mail: contact@walksaroundstortford.org.uk

What do you think?

Please let us know your views on anything raised in this Newsletter.

Postal and e-mail addresses are on Page 5.

On sale now: £6

21 walks from 3 - 9 miles

Available from:

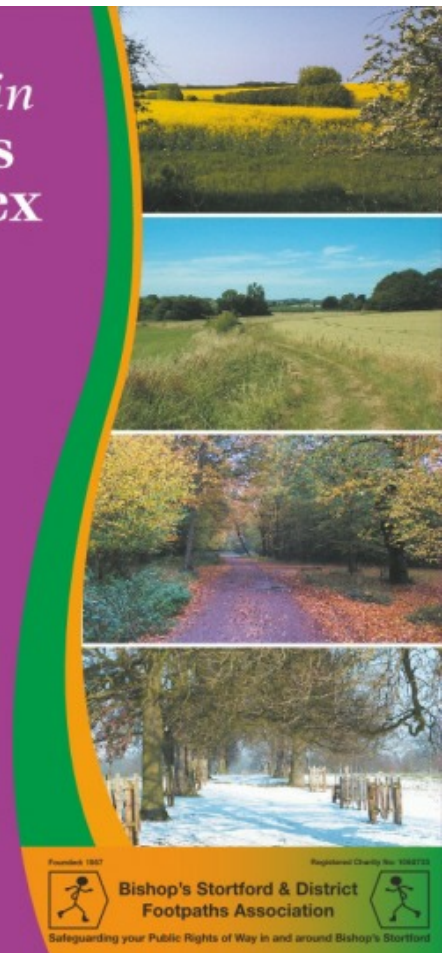
Bishop's Stortford Tourist Office

Waterstones, Bishop's Stortford

Our website

Walk Leaders

*Walks in
Herts
& Essex*
Vol 4



Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan

Bishop's Stortford Town Council has overseen the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for the Silverleys and Meads wards of the town.

The Neighbourhood Plan allows residents of the town to have a direct say in the shape of new development. Due to government policy it is not possible to prevent new housing being built, but the local community can directly influence how it is built.

A Neighbourhood Planning team was formed of representatives of the communities in the wards of Silverleys and Meads, local residents, local councillors, local businesses, developers and volunteers. Agendas, Minutes of Meetings and other documentation can be found via the Bishop's Stortford Town Council website, in the Document Library under 'Neighbourhood Planning', <http://www.bishopstortfordtc.gov.uk/document-library>. There are policies on Housing and Design, Green Infrastructure, Transport, Education, Health, Sport, and Business and Employment. Committee members of the Association made contributions to the Green Infrastructure policy.

Following a number of drafts the Neighbourhood Plan is now at the formal consultation stage, as required by Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and is available for members of the public to view via the Neighbourhood Plan pages on the Town Council website. It can be downloaded in a variety of formats. Alternatively, the plan can be viewed at the Town Council Offices or a paper copy can be requested. Consultation started on 1 February 2014 and comments can be made via the Town Council website, by email to comments@stortfordplan.org or in writing to Bishop's Stortford Town Council, The Old Monastery, Windhill, Bishop's Stortford, Herts CM23 2ND (tel: 01279 652274) by 25 March 2014.

All Bishop's Stortford residents can comment on the Neighbourhood Plan: you do not need to live in the Silverleys or Meads wards. Take this opportunity to participate, and vote in the forthcoming referendum. If you don't, you have surrendered your only opportunity to have a say and make new development better for the town than it would otherwise be.

The formal consultation runs from 1 February 2014 to 25 March 2014. In May 2014 the plan will be submitted for independent examination, and it is hoped that the plan will go to referendum either late in 2014 or early 2015. Timing will be dependent on the examination stage.

Footpath added to the Definitive Map

The footpath that runs through Widford churchyard has been recognised as a public footpath and has been added to the Definitive Map. The County Council applied for a modification order in 2013 but this was turned down after the diocesan solicitor objected on the grounds that nobody owns a churchyard and so it wasn't possible to give implied dedication. This ruling was successfully appealed by the Ramblers Association using evidence from Acts of Parliament and other cases involving churchyard paths.

Whilst access to footpaths through churchyards hasn't been denied, a legal ruling that a Public Right of Way couldn't exist through a churchyard could cause problems when stiles or gates require maintenance or repair.

(Original article by Chris Pagan in the East Herts Ramblers Association newsletter)

Beauty and Misery!

Avoid the misery by joining a walk with one of our dedicated walk leaders.

Charity shops and old bookshops take me on journeys that I never knew I wanted to go on. Quite a few years ago I found a country walking book with a foreword by Ian Botham. "100 favourite walks down your way". There was one entitled "Round the Manor". 'This pleasant walk takes you past the beautiful grounds of Audley End House and also offers the opportunity to explore picturesque Saffron Walden.' Just the ticket.

I picked up the book and wrote out the instructions: a 4½mile walk – 2½hours, easy going, but slightly hilly on the longer route. Had quickly read, from Audley End station and then point 5 read 'bear right to walk up the approach road to the station.' Nowhere did it say.....do not walk on a Sunday. It was a Sunday. But I was a beginner to this walking lark (and still feel that I am) – but did take some water and a snack. My dog, George, likes a long walk and it sounded fun.

I didn't have a walk leader or even a map. But also minus compass and a mobile. It was only at Saffron Walden – sort of familiar surroundings. How difficult can it get? Off we went. First hurdle. Where was Wendon Road or even a footpath sign? It sounded so simple. 'Cross the River Cam and, at the end of a small spinney, bear left into a footpath leading along the edge of this.' There was a little brook, a lot of overgrowth and George was loving it. I only had written instructions and no map. When I got home I found that I had left out one of the first instructions – turn right. It would have helped. Eventually I did find myself in Saffron Walden. Quite a lot of retracing of steps and feeling as though I was in the jungle – I was either not on a footpath or this was one that not many people still walked.

Phew, in Saffron Walden. I love the feel of all the old buildings and there always seems to be something that I hadn't noticed before. People were admiring George and I was able to have a cup of tea and some refreshments. However, it was now clouding over. Not to worry though. I did have my rain mac with me and once I have decided to do a walk it always seemed that come rain or shine, I would have to tackle it head on. I was at point 4 – how much further could it be? – point 5 was the end of the walk. The rest of the walk promised a view of deer as one turned right onto a footpath signed to Springwell. So, refreshed and eager to get on - I might even get back in time to have a swim and Jacuzzi - easily found the footpath by the football club and followed the footpath that went uphill. On many occasions I have parked by the football club but had never realized that there was a footpath out into the countryside. The joys of walking, coming across somewhere new and such a lovely day to enjoy the peace and quiet of beautiful views.

I was looking for a track under the power pylons and the deer. Pylons seemed to now be everywhere – but in the far far distance. No matter how far I walked these did not seem to get nearer. We had a little rest. Now it was raining quite hard so put on rain mac. George was looking a little tired as well. Not sure where I went wrong but did finally find myself in Little Chesterford into Great Chesterford village. This was a euphoric and miserable moment as I had somehow convinced myself that I would miraculously end up at Audley End Rail Station. The penny dropped – a blonde moment as I realized that I must be doing the long walk now and surely this is quite a way from Audley End Station? But a road - civilization - can't be far now. It seemed too far away to totally retrace my steps. Cripes. This is nowhere near Audley End Station and I now find out that trains do not stop at Great Chesterford on a Sunday. I don't think I had enough cash for the fare anyway. It would seem that buses do not run along here either on a Sunday. George looks at me.....how much further?

To cut a long story short I hadn't realized that some walks would not be 'circular'. That for a local walk, I needed a map. That footpaths were not always very clearly signposted. That I should have read all the directions and notes before I set out and so on. In my eagerness, on the spur of the moment, doing a 'pleasant walk' suitable for everyone would turn into such a nightmare. It seemed like misery at the time. Perhaps someone I knew would come to my rescue. I began to doubt that I was even walking in the right direction! You can imagine walking along from Great Chesterford to Audley End – with George now on his lead (not his idea of a pleasant walk). Finally we get back to Audley End and too late for the swim.

I have kept the book as a memento. It is supposed to remind me of how to prepare for a walk. So I am very appreciative of local associations who do keep our footpaths in good repair as this is not the only disaster that I have managed to encounter.

Perhaps you have a story or walk to share with other members.
Ann Lowe, BSDFA Secretary

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Membership application / Subscription renewal Form

The Bishop's Stortford & District Footpaths Association was founded in 1957 to "watch and take appropriate action for the safeguarding of public rights in respect of paths, bridleways, green lanes, commons, village greens and roadside verges" in the Hertfordshire and Essex border area around Bishop's Stortford extending across a radius of about 10 miles. We liaise with local Planning and Highways authorities and monitor proposals affecting Rights of Way. The Association can and does protest, if necessary, at a Public Inquiry.

We have published to date eight booklets recommending mainly circular walks of distances varying between 5 and 10 miles, the most recent in 2012. "Walks of the Month" are offered on our website.

We lead weekend walks of 5-7 miles throughout the year. Details are found in the Walks Programmes published in the Newsletter and on the website. All are welcome.

If you would like to support our aims, please become a member and return this page with your details to the Membership Secretary c/o:

4 Chandlers Close, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 4FF

The cost of annual subscription for family membership is £4 or £10 for 3 years.

I enclose a cheque for £.....being my/our subscription for 1 year / 3 years plus £.....donation (optional) (made payable to Bishop's Stortford & District Footpaths Association)

Name: (BLOCK LETTERS)

Address:

.....

Tel. No:

Email:

Newsletters will be sent by e-mail twice a year.

Members' details are held on record in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998

Summer Walks 2014

For further information on each walk, please go to our website: www.walksaroundstortford.org.uk

Date / Time	Start & Grid Reference	Walk Leader / Contact No
Sunday 13th April 10am	Bishop's Stortford - Tesco Car Park GR: TL472218 / Post Code: CM23 4DD	Paul 01279 501596
Sunday 27th April 10am	Tilty Church- car park GR: TL600265 / Post Code: CM6 2EG	Dave 01279 832632 0792 025 4825
Sunday 11th May 10am	Sawbridgeworth - Bell Street Car Park GR: TL482148 / Post Code: CM21 9AA	Sarah 0741 141 1104
Sunday 1st June 10am	Hunsdon Post Office GR: TL417140 / Post Code: SG12 8NH	Peter 01279 835036 0794 143 5001
Sunday 15th June 10am	Sheering Village Hall GR: TL506139 / Post Code: CM22 7LX	Brian 01279 812574
Sunday 29th June 10am	Patmore Heath (at the Wildlife Trust noticeboard) GR: TL441257 / Post Code: SG11 2LW	John 07799804429

Summer Break

Sunday 13th July 10am	Hatfield Heath - Car park next to the chip shop GR: TL523150 / Post Code: CM22 7EB	Paul 01279 501596
Sunday 7th September 10am	Widdington Church - Layby in front of church GR: TL539317 / Post Code: CB11 3SF	Brian 01279 812574
Sunday 21st September 10am	Manuden - Meet at the church GR: TL491267 / Post Code: CM23 1DJ	Sue & Brian 07889046723
Sunday 5th October 10am	Great Dunmow - St Mary's Parish Church GR: TL629230 / Post Code: CM6 2AE	Alan 01371 876792
Sunday 19th October 10am	Thorley, Twyford Lock - Pig Lane Car Park GR: TL493193 / Post Code: CM22 7PA	Peter 01279 835036 0794 143 5001

The walks are generally 5 - 6 miles long and normally last between 2 and 2 ½ hours.

This Newsletter is available on the website. To respect members' privacy, leaders' surnames will no longer be included in the Programme. The website will give more details on the walk, including expected distance and any last minute changes. Those without internet access should continue to telephone the walk leaders.